

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Well, here we are, off and running for another successful year! Already there have been some great shows that were well attended. It shows that the hobby is continuing to grow even though our membership base is getting older. As some of us retire, we have more time to attend shows, go to antique stores, and search the web for bottles and go-withs. I plan on attending more shows this year because I can.

I was usually around for the Milwaukee show in February since it is local and it's probably the best-attended show in the country. It has a great breweriana contingency and always has a waiting list of several hundred people eager to get into the show when it opens. Aisles are so crowded you must take turns walking up to a table. Great show that I will, unfortunately, miss this year because we're escaping the Wisconsin weather! The next show I usually attend is the Tampa/St. Petersburg show in mid-February which, as I'm writing this in mid-January, I am making plans to attend. It has a great venue, and I can't beat the free room and board with Bill Mitchell. I plan to get to the Minneapolis show in April. Unfortunately, my scheduled second hip replacement and recovery happen during the Baltimore show, which falls in mid-March. But I'll be back in shape by the Rochester and Mansfield, Ohio shows, which are in late April and early May. Shupp's Grove in Adamstown, Pennsylvania (end of May) is looking good, and I'll possibly dovetail that with the Washington, Pennsylvania show, which is the next day. I couldn't go to the National Bottle Museum in New York last year, so this year the Ballston Spa show in June is definitely on my radar. This is only covering the first half of the year! Fall provides many great possibilities, too. I'm gearing up to attend 10 to 12 shows this year—ambitious but doable! I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at these shows.

Again, I am really excited about the Federation and where we are going. The Virtual Museum is growing almost daily, the Auction Price Report has brought in many new members, and the *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* (AB&GC) magazine continues to provide a growing number of subscribers with a wide range of articles covering everything from digging to displaying bottles and glass in every shape, color and size. We have a host of articles awaiting publication but always welcome additional submittals, so write your stories and send them in!

We have a huge, very ambitious list of things to accomplish this year. We want to expand the membership, collect and document histories of collections and books, and increase video reference material via our website, Facebook site and Instagram. We will be upgrading our website, removing old links, and refreshing others. We have come a long way toward adding past issues of magazines to our reference library, but many more still need to be scanned into the database. Then we need to cross-reference and index issues and articles etc. etc.

This all takes volunteers. I am pleased to see an increase in the number of members expressing interest in assisting with these projects. We are working to capitalize on that enthusiasm by forming committees and getting members working in their areas of interest and expertise.

Historically, we relied on the Board members to do most of the work; now, we are going to focus on committees to get more people involved. More people, more ideas, and more accomplishments resulting in bringing some projects that have been on the back burner into reality. Just look at how much time and effort it took to get the Virtual Museum up and running, and now displaying tens of thousands of images complete with extensive research, descriptions and history. The progress that has been made in just the last year is amazing... from 500 spinners at the beginning of 2022 to 700 plus images as the year came to a close. Have you gone to other static museum websites and viewed their collections? Few have the quality of pictures we have, and none have the in-depth stories behind each exhibit. The FOHBC Virtual Museum is really leaps and bounds ahead of any other museum. It's something to be proud of, for sure!

So, let us know where you'd like to put your interests and expertise to work for your FOHBC. Share your ideas and let us know how you can help.

Post Script. Our luck in avoiding Covid ran out! Both Alice and I came down with it two weeks into our escape from Wisconsin RV trip to Arizona by way of Texas. Being cooped up in an RV in Texas is better than being cooped up in Wisconsin this time of year but it's been a very unpleasant experience.

Fortunately, I received an email from Wayne Harris in Australia which I followed up with a call. Wayne provided an interesting update to some information I had received many years ago but never followed up on. While at a flea market down under, a lady noticed a Warner bottle on his table. She nonchalantly said "I was the last manager of this Warner Safe Cure company." Wayne jumped at the chance to talk to her and discovered she had extensive paperwork from the firm. It was in business until 1946 when it was forced to close because it could no longer get the herbs needed to formulate the product since most of them came from Japan.

A few years later Wayne acquired the paperwork! Wayne leafed through the paperwork during our phone call and we read over the changes in formulation and compounding dictated by the parent company in Rochester. It was like I was in their office. They discussed label and trademark changes due to the Food and Drug Act regulating patent medicines.

Wayne and I will be collaborating on a chapter in my Warners book on the Melbourne branch after we sort out all the information contained in those files. What a discovery!

